

**COMMITTEE ON OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY
MEETING MINUTES**

August 26, 2015

THE AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY CONVENED IN A REGULAR MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2015 AT 2PM IN THE BOARDS & COMMISSIONS ROOM, FIRST FLOOR, ROOM 1101, CITY HALL 301 W. 2ND STREET.

Council Member Leslie Pool called the meeting to order at 2:12 PM. In attendance were Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo, Council Member Delia Garza, Council Member Don Zimmerman, Environmental Board Chair Mary Gay Maxwell, and Parks & Recreation Board Chair Jane Rivera. William Moriarty, Chair of the Water and Wastewater Commission, was absent.

Agenda Item #1: Approval of minutes.

The minutes of the June 24, 2015 meeting were approved on CM Zimmerman's motion and CM Garza's second. Vote 4-0-0-0.

Agenda Item #2: General Citizen Communications

There were no speakers.

Agenda Item #4: Consider and develop recommendations on the appointment of one additional member to the CodeNEXT Citizens Advisory Group.

A recommendation to appoint Lauren Claire Ice to the CodeNEXT Citizens Advisory Group was unanimously supported by the committee.

Agenda Item #6: Update and discussion on CodeNEXT and the recommendations of the Green Infrastructure Working Group. (Jim Robertson, Manager, Development Services Department; Matt Hollon, Environmental Conservation Program Manager, Watershed Protection Department; Erin Wood, Principal Planner, Watershed Protection Department)

Jim Robertson, Development Services Manager with the Planning and Development Department provided background information related to the CodeNEXT project. CodeNEXT came about from the Imagine Austin Plan and consists of eight priority programs: Compact and Connected, Sustainable Water, Workforce Education, Green Infrastructure, Creative Economy, Household Affordability, Healthy Austin, and Revise Land Development Regulations. Mr. Robertson further explained the five phases of CodeNEXT and explained that the project is currently in Phase 2 which is the phase in which staff will develop an administrative review draft that will include review of several internal City departments. The teams associated with CodeNEXT are: Code Advisory Group (CAG), Core Team: 13 City Departments, Consultants, and the Planning and

Zoning Department. Then Erin Wood, Principal Planner and Matt Hollon, Environmental Conservation Program Manager with the Watershed Protection Department provided a summary of stakeholder feedback and recommendations received during the Green Infrastructure Working Group stakeholder process which spanned a period of six to eight months. Per Council Direction in November 20, 2014 Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Water Management were to be a focus of CodeNEXT. The purpose of the Green Infrastructure Working Group is to determine how to achieve the Imagine Austin goals of integrating nature into the City, sustainably managing the City's water resources and creating complete communities through revisions to the Land Development Code. There were four themes that were addressed in the meetings: 1) Land Cover and Natural Function, 2) Integrate Nature into the City, 3) Beneficial Use of Stormwater, and 4) Stormwater Options for Redevelopment/Infill. Summary of stakeholder input has been published on the website and staff will continue to add to the document as staff continues to receive feedback from stakeholder groups. No action was taken.

There were three speakers:

- Sam Rusek spoke in favor.
- David King spoke in favor.
- Eleanor McKinney spoke in favor.

Agenda Item #5: Review and consider potential changes to policies related to the renaming of City facilities, including Parks and recreation Department facilities. (Cora Wright, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Department; Ricardo Soliz, Division Manager, Parks and Recreation Department).

Ricardo Soliz, Division Manager with the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD), provided an overview of § 14-1-33 - Procedures for Naming a Park or Facility, and § 14-1-32 – Naming Policy in the City code. In addition, Mr. Soliz discussed challenges with the current code, and provided recommendations for code amendments. The recommendations primarily focused around setting criteria for non-financial contributions and criteria for financial contributions. The recommendations have been presented to the Parks and Recreation Board (PARB) with no resolution as of yet. The challenge for the PARB is the difficulty in choosing between two or more name recommendations in an objective way. PARD agrees to conduct further research, include cost benefits, and ensure the City's highest ideals are taken into consideration when selecting a name for a public facility. The recommendation to place a moratorium on the naming of city facilities until the item is taken up by the PARB was approved on Vice Chair Garza's motion and on CM Zimmerman's second. Vote 4-0-0-0.

Agenda Item #7: Discussion and possible action regarding options available to the City to permanently reserve parking spaces located in the public right-of-way for park use at the Caswell Tennis Center. (Sara Hensley, Director, Parks and recreation Department; Kimberly McNeeley, Assistant Director, Parks and Recreation Department; Lee Austin, Engineer, Austin Transportation Department).

Kimberly McNeeley, Assistant Director with the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD), provided background information related to parking in the Caswell Tennis Center, located at 2312 Shoal Creek Boulevard. In 1931, PARD purchased the tract of land. From 1947 to 2011, the

straight-in twenty-eight parking spaces were assumed to be PARD's responsibility and were maintained and re-striped as needed by PARD. The City's Austin Transportation Department (ATD) and the Office of Real Estate Services (ORES) determined that the parking spaces are in the right-of-way and as such should be maintained by ATD. Thus, parking spaces reserved only for Caswell Tennis Center patrons would be inconsistent with ATD's standard practices. PARD has worked with ATD to mitigate the concerns and they have come to an agreement to dedicate twenty-eight spaces as parkland, but the departments require Council approval to make the change. The recommendation to direct PARD staff to work with ATD to transfer authority over the right-of-way to PARD before allowing Council to formally dedicate the land as park use was approved on CM Zimmerman's motion and Vice Chair Garza's second. Vote 3-0-0-1. MPT Tovo was off the dais.

There were four speakers:

- Ann Graham spoke in favor.
- Leslie Cameron spoke in favor.
- Michael Seghers donated time to Leslie Cameron.
- Bryan Snoddy spoke in favor.
- Carol Welder spoke in favor.
- Mike McHone spoke in favor.

Agenda Item #8: Discuss and recommend a resolution directing the City Manager to clarify the physical boundaries of the Town Lake Community Event Center Venue project. (related to item #9).

Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo shared that Council has had questions over the years about how the Town Lake Community Event Center venue is defined. The proposed resolution presented by MPT Tovo directs the City Manager to clarify boundaries. It has implications for what amenities can be funded and through what funding mechanisms. Having the appropriate boundaries clarified will be a benefit as new phases of Town Lake Park are being developed. The recommended resolution was approved on Mayor Pro Tem Tovo's motion and on Vice Chair Garza's second. Vote 4-0-0-0.

Agenda Item #9: Discuss legal issues related to a resolution directing the City Manager to clarify the physical boundaries of the Town Lake Community Event Center Venue project. (Private consultation with legal counsel – Section 551.071 of the Government Code) (Related to item #8).

This item was withdrawn.

Agenda Item #10: Discussion of future agenda items.

Agenda Item #3: Tree regulations (Michael Embesi, City Arborist)

Michael Embesi, City Arborist with the Development Services Department, provided A summary of the City's tree initiatives, tree benefits, regulatory jurisdiction, and ordinance

generalities. Furthermore, Mr. Embesi briefly mentioned the various stakeholders and departments that are responsible for maintenance and operations of trees. No action was taken.

Council Member Leslie Pool adjourned the meeting at 4:27 PM.

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COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT
OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Date: August 26, 2015

Agenda Item #: 4

Agenda Item: Consider and develop recommendations on the appointment of one additional member to the CodeNEXT Citizens Advisory Group.

Vote No vote taken.

Sponsors/Department: Mayor and Council

Summary of Discussion

CM Pool nominated Lauren Claire Ice to serve on the CodeNEXT Citizens Advisory Group.

Public Comments

None

Direction

CM Pool forwarded the name of Lauren Claire Ice to the agenda of the September 1, 2015 regular Council Meeting for formal approval.

Recommendation

The committee recommended the nomination of Lauren Claire Ice to serve on the CodeNEXT Citizens Advisory Group.



COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Date: August 26, 2015

Agenda Item #: 5

Agenda Item: Review and consider potential changes to policies related to the renaming of City facilities, including Parks and recreation Department facilities.

Vote 4-0-0-0

Sponsors/Department: Mayoral referral/ Parks & Recreation Department

Summary of Discussion

Ricardo Soliz, Division Manager with the Parks and Recreation Department (PARC), provided an overview of § 14-1-33 - Procedures for Naming a Park or Facility, and § 14-1-32 – Naming Policy in the City code.

Currently, the process is initiated with a request submitted by a citizen to the PARC staff. The Public Information Office within PARC issues a press release to notify citizens about the 90 day public comment period. After the 90 days, PARC staff then presents all renaming submissions to the Parks and Recreation Board (PARB) where a recommendation is then made and proceeds to the Open Space, Environment and Sustainability Council Committee for a recommendation to send to City Council for final approval.

In addition, Mr. Soliz discussed challenges with the current code, and provided recommendations for code amendments. As stated by current code, a facility may be dedicated to a person to recognize a valuable contribution or a creditable service to the community. PARC staff would like to clarify these two requirements, as defined by the City. In summary, the recommended amendments primarily focus on setting criteria for non-financial contributions and criteria for financial contributions, gauging community support, and setting a minimum amount of time in which the person has deceased in order to be considered in a renaming.

Mr. Soliz explained that the recommendations have been presented to PARB with no resolution as of yet. The challenge for the PARB is the difficulty in choosing between two or more name recommendations in an objective way. PARB Chair, Jane Rivera, noted an additional challenge of naming a park or facility after two equally deserving individuals.

- *Common management in other cities*

CM Pool asked PARC staff if any research had been done on how other cities manage this issue. Soliz explained that many of the current recommendations that are being proposed are more of the common ones. Some of the different types of recommendations include those of the federal government and how they do not name anyone that is still living.

- *Management among City libraries and local school districts*

MPT Tovo explained that the public libraries and local school districts may also serve as valuable points of reference in terms of their naming conventions. Overall, Tovo wants to ensure that renaming is done for individuals that truly represent the highest ideals on concert with the City without being influenced by the idea of fundraising by those who can make financial contributions when requesting a renaming.

- *City Code 14-1-12 (C)*

CM Zimmerman asked if staff had any background information about why the policy currently states that a facility named for an individual may not be renamed. Staff explained that it is a policy they would like to address in the overall amendments.

Public Comments

None

Direction

PARB agrees to conduct further research, include cost benefits, and ensure the City's highest ideals are taken into consideration when selecting a name for a public facility.

Recommendation

The recommendation to place a moratorium on the naming of city facilities until the item is taken up by the PARB was approved on Vice Chair Garza's motion and on CM Zimmerman's second.



COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Date: August 26, 2015

Agenda Item #: 6

Agenda Item: Update and discussion on CodeNEXT and the recommendations of the Green Infrastructure Working Group.

Vote No action taken.

Sponsors/Department: Watershed Protection Department

Summary of Discussion

Jim Robertson, Development Services Manager with the Planning and Development Department, provided background information related to the CodeNEXT project. CodeNEXT came about from the Imagine Austin Plan and consists of eight priority programs: Compact and Connected; Sustainable Water; Workforce Education; Green Infrastructure; Creative Economy; Household Affordability; Healthy Austin; and Revise Land Development Regulations. Mr. Robertson further explained the five phases of CodeNEXT and explained that the project is currently in Phase 2 in which staff will develop a draft administrative review that will include overview of several internal City departments. The teams associated with CodeNEXT are: Code Advisory Group (CAG); and the Core Team: 13 City Departments, Consultants, and the Planning and Zoning Department.

Erin Wood, Principal Planner, and Matt Hollon, Environmental Conservation Program Manager, with the Watershed Protection Department provided a summary of stakeholder feedback and recommendations received during the Green Infrastructure Working Group stakeholder process, which spanned a period of six to eight months. Per Council Direction in November 2014, Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Water Management were to be a focus of CodeNEXT. The purpose of the Green Infrastructure Working Group is to determine how to achieve the Imagine Austin goals of integrating nature into the City, sustainably managing the City's water resources and creating complete communities through revisions to the Land Development Code.

The working group consisted of 300 stakeholders and six meetings between January and July of 2015. There were four themes that were addressed in the meetings: 1) Land Cover and Natural Function, 2) Integrate Nature into the City, 3) Beneficial Use of Stormwater, and 4) Stormwater Options for Redevelopment/Infill. Summary of stakeholder input has been published on the website and staff will continue to add to the document as staff continues to receive feedback from stakeholder groups. This feedback consisted of opinions, and proposed solutions regarding the four themes mentioned above.

The big-picture comments included a desire for reestablishment of intent language in new code, writing the code to enable site-specific difference, using watershed data to help inform land use planning decisions, accounting for Austin's unique climate and geography, and performance-based, versus prescriptive, requirements, consideration of affordability impacts, less variances,

and to consider extending these policies to single-family subdivisions and individual building permits.

The next steps include draft Code testing in the Fall of 2015, completion of a draft review in the Summer of 2016, and a final public review of the draft in the Fall of 2016.

- *Cost-benefit ratio*

CM Zimmerman inquired about the affordability of some of the proposed solutions. Speaker Eleanor McKinney explained that one of the next steps that staff will pursue will be a cost comparison in November of 2015.

Public Comments

- Sam Rusek spoke in favor of the item.
- David King spoke in favor of the item.
- Eleanor McKinney spoke in favor of the item.

Direction

None taken.

Recommendation

None made.

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COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Date: August 26, 2015

Agenda Item #: 7

Agenda Item: Discussion and possible action regarding options available to the City to permanently reserve parking spaces located in the public right-of-way for park use at the Caswell Tennis Center.

Vote 3-0-0-1. MPT Tovo was off the dais.

Sponsors/Department: Parks & Recreation Department and Austin Transportation Department

Summary of Discussion

Kimberly McNeeley, Assistant Director with the Parks and Recreation Department (PAR), provided background information related to parking in the Caswell Tennis Center, located at 2312 Shoal Creek Boulevard. In 1931, PAR purchased the tract of land that was then called Shoal Creek Park. In 1947, City Council passed a resolution identifying the portion of the tract located on 24th Street and Lamar Boulevard for construction of the Caswell Tennis Center. In 2005, PAR installed “parking only” signs along the straight-in to designate the parking to Caswell patrons in front of the tennis center. In 2011, the Austin Transportation Department (ATD) notified PAR that the designated parking spots were located in the right-of-way and so the signs would need to be removed. In 2012, ATD installed 4 parking spaces for Caswell staff and multiple 2-hour parking signs along Shoal Creek in front of the tennis center, but not in the right-of-way.

By 2015, ATD and the Office of Real Estate Services (ORES) determined that the parking spaces in the right-of-way should be maintained by ATD because all. Thus, parking spaces reserved only for Caswell Tennis Center patrons would be inconsistent with ATD’s standard practices. PAR has worked with ATD to mitigate the concerns and they have come to an agreement to dedicate twenty-eight spaces as parkland, but the departments require Council approval to make the change.

Currently, ATD is working with West Campus neighborhood associates to develop the West Campus parking expansion plan, which will better manage parking in the West Campus area. In addition to this plan, City staff has ordered a survey of the land to identify which space is right-of-way and which is parkland and found that the land is actually considered as right-of way, therefore the land falls under the authority of ATD. According to City practice, reserved parking is not permitted in a right-of-way for a specific or long-term purpose. In the case of Caswell Tennis Center, the City has made an exception in the past but would prefer not cause inconsistencies throughout the city.

Based on the desire to remain consistent and the need for parking, staff offered three options to be considered. First, the straight-in parking spaces could be permanently designated for Caswell by making it dedicated parkland, and it would be managed by the tennis pro shop. Secondly, the straight-in parking spaces could remain in the right-of-way and the Caswell Tennis Center is

given permission to issue parking permits to the tennis patrons. Lastly, metered parking could be included along Shoal Creek Boulevard. Lee Austin, an engineer from ATD, explained that the director of ATD feels that the best way to resolve the issue would be to possibly exchange land for future mitigation and future transpiration purposes so that the land would entirely be under the governance of PARD. Another issue facing the Caswell Tennis Center is the language school that is nearby the tennis center and their need for parking.

- *Permanently reserved spaces*

CM Garza asked about the metered parking spots downtown that are sometimes used as valet parking spots for businesses. Austin explained that the City does issue short-term rentals for parking which is a service that is paid for by the business to help make up for the meter revenue lost during those times.

- *Unmetered parking*

CM Pool asked if the unmetered area on the eastside of the tennis center can be regulated by the City. Austin explained that the spaces can indeed be regulated since the spaces are in the right-of-way. In addition, the City has received a request from the University Area Partners to complete the parking plan at Caswell Tennis Center before addressing any metering in the area.

- *Extended times for metered parking*

CM Pool inquired about the possibility of extending the hours of the current two hour parking located at the tennis center. Austin explained that the City's meters can certainly be extended, but as far as making more available will pose a conflict with the language school if their students end up taking up a lot of that extended time. However, if the language school students have to pay for the extended metered parking then they will most likely park somewhere else.

- *Building additional parking*

CM Zimmerman asked staff if additional parking could be built because based on the map of the area it appears that there is room. Austin explained that there is in fact room and if PARD had authority over the right-of-way that more parking could be added. Zimmerman also noted that it appears there would even be room for water retention for the impervious cover.

- *Parkland dedication*

CM Pool asked for the historical background regarding supporting the dedication of parkland. Staff explained that ATD is amenable to giving PARD the 28 parking spaces so that the PARB can submit a recommendation to Council to then dedicate the spaces as parkland. PARD would work with the contractor at the Caswell Tennis Center to ensure that the parking is then made available for the tennis patrons. This agreement would allow ATD to keep some street parking in the right-of-way for non-tennis patrons and work with Council to decide on a plan for metered parking.

Public Comments

- Ann Graham spoke in favor.
- Leslie Cameron spoke in favor.
- Michael Seghers donated time to Leslie Cameron.
- Bryan Snoddy spoke in favor.
- Carol Welder spoke in favor.

-Mike McHone spoke in favor.

Direction

PARD staff will work with ATD to allow PARD to ultimately be responsible for the 28 parking spaces in order to remove them from ATD's authority. Furthermore, CM Pool requested two follow up memos from staff. One explaining how to vacate the right-of-way and make it parkland and another about the resolutions that may have been made in the past that designated the eastside of Shoal Creek for the revenue making for the West Campus neighborhoods.

Recommendation

The recommendation to direct PARD staff to work with ATD to transfer authority over the right-of-way to PARD before allowing Council to formally dedicate it as parkland was approved on CM Zimmerman's motion and Vice Chair Garza's second.

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COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT
OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Date: August 26, 2015

Agenda Item #: 8

Agenda Item: Discuss and recommend a resolution directing the City Manager to clarify the physical boundaries of the Town Lake Community Event Center Venue project.

Vote 4-0-0-0

Sponsors/Department: MPT Tovo/ Parks & Recreation Department

Summary of Discussion

Mayor Pro Tem Kathie Tovo shared that Council has had questions over the years about how the Town Lake Community Event Center venue is defined. The proposed resolution presented by MPT Tovo directs the City Manager to clarify boundaries based on the thought that it would be in the public interest just to have that clarification provided. It has implications for what amenities can be funded and through what funding mechanisms; therefore, having the appropriate boundaries clarified will be a benefit especially as new phases of Town Lake Park are being developed.

Public Comments

None

Direction

The committee decided to withdraw the executive session related to this item until the item goes to full Council for consideration.

Recommendation

The recommended resolution was approved on Mayor Pro Tem Tovo's motion and on Vice Chair Garza's second.